LETTER

Written by that Famous and Faithfull

Minister of CHRIST;

Mr. JOHN LIVINGSTON

Unto his Parishoners of Ancrum

IN

SCOTLAND

Dated, *Rotterdam, October* 7. 1671.

The Second Edition. To which are Affix'd Notes by Mr. *Robert M'ward*, and some by another hand, very Suitable.

Hosea 5. 1, 2. *Hear ye this, O Priests, and hearken, ye House of Israel, and give ye ear, O House of the King; for Judgement is toward you, because ye have been a Snare on Mizpah, and a Net spread upon Tabor,* Verse 2. *The Revolters are profound to make Slaughter.*

Isaiah 9. 16. *For the Leaders of this People cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed.* Chap. 3. 12. *As for my People, children are their oppressors, and Women rule over them: O my People, they which lead thee, causs thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.*

Hosea 4. 6. *My People are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me.*

Rom. 16. 17. *Now, I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.*

2 Thess. 3. 6. *Now, we command you, Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every Brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.*

1 Cor. 5. 11. *But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one, no not to eat.*

2 Cor. 6. 17. *Wherefore come out among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.*

Zech. 11. 4, 5. *Thus saith the Lord my God, feed the Flock of the Slaughter: whose Possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them, say, Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich: and their own Shepherds pity them not.*

Re-Printed in the Year MDCCX.

Mr. John Livingston's Letter to his Parishoners of *Ancrum*,

Well Beloved in the Lord.

I Cannot Excuse my long Silence. I have a wofull lazy Disposition, and Indisposition for Writing; Yea, I judge any thing I write, is scarce worthy that any should look on, or read: besides that, my slow and shaking hand is some hinderance to me. Yet when I consider, that I have an Account to make for You to the Great Shepherd, as having Laboured amongst You in the Ministrie of His Word, some Fourteen Years; and now after near by Nine Years Banishment, Age and Infirmities creep on; and through a constant Pain of the Gravel, I have much ado, once a Week, on the LORD's Day, to go a very short way to the Publick Worship: so as there is no great probability, I can ever see Your Faces in this Life; and it is most fitting for me, to set my Face forward toward my last Reckoning. I thought I behooved, in a manner, to make unto You my Testament, and open my Mind concerning my self, concerning You, and concerning the present Posture of Affairs in that *Land*.

And in the Entry, notwithstanding of all the Sad Things that have fallen out of late, I would put You in mind of the many Good Days we have seen together, both of Sabbath Days, and Solemn Communion Days, wherein we saw the LORD's Power and His Grace in His Sanctuary; that in remembrance thereof, we may exalt His Name together; and know, that though He cause Grief, yet He will have Compassion, according to the Multitude of His Mercies. Ye may easily discern what a Difference is between those Days, and such as Ye now see; and what an Evil and Bitter thing it is, that by our not improving of those Days, we have provoked Him to hide His Face, and send such an Inundation of matchless Apostacy, Perjury, Persecution, Profanity, Atheism, yea, Darkness, Distractions, and Despondency amongst His own; in all which we may yet expect He is waiting to be Gracious, and will be exalted that he may have mercy upon us.

1. For my part, I have peace in regard of these particulars, 1. That not only since my entrie into the Ministry, but even from my Infancy, the Lord was pleased to lead me to an aversion from Prelacy, a stinted Liturgie, the Ceremonies and other Corruptions of that time; and that in my Ministrie, both in *Ireland* and *Scotland*, I joined with those, who were streight in the Cause of God, and testified against those evils; 2. that I joined in the National Covenant and Solemn League and Covenant, and other parts of the works of Reformation that was carried

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If he had Peace in this, what is the Peace of those who have declined it? It cannot both be from the Spirit of GOD: And if GOD approved of the Prosecution of it, can He approve of the Subversion of it, which the Union is. If this would have been a Door of Hope; then sure the Joint Testimonies of all the Ministers and Church Judicatures, to that which is subversive of it, doth shut all Door of Hope, as much as in them lyes.

carried on in the Year 1638, and thereafter, as being assured that the Lord did then, does yet, and will ever approve of that work and the prosecution therof. 84

2. That I came to *Ancram*, not out of any Worldly end, but from a desire to do service to God, and to the Souls of his People; and had thereto the Lord's call by your Invitation, and the consent and sending of the rightly constituted Church, that then was, both the General Assembly and Presbytery. 3. That in my Ministrie among you, howbeit I came much short of attainment, my resolution and aim was only to set the Glory of God, and good of your Souls before mine eyes; and that it pleased Him so to bless my poor weak endeavours, as that sundry Seals of the Ministry of his Word were visibly seen, some whereof are already in Glory, and some are wrestling thither. 4. That when I appeared before the Council, at what time I was Sentenced with Banishment for refusing to swear the Oath, as they called it, of Alledgeance, and which was indeed the Oath of Supremacy, and did really contain such a Supremacy, as is since fully established; that then I did not as was propounded by them, take time to advise of mine Answer, which I judged could import my unclearness in the matter; and that it was not so much out of respect to me, as for that very end propounded, but told plainly, I was fully clear, and resolved not to take it. For these and many such singular Passages of the Lord's gracious guiding me in my Pilgrimage, I desire from my heart to bless his Glorious Name, and would beg help of all his People to join with me therein. But, 2. I have challenges beside many others in respect of these particulars, that all along in my Ministrie, I did not stir up or improve the Gift that the Lord had given me, nor so carry my self like a Spiritual, Grave, Diligent and Faithful Servant of Christ, as I ought to have done. 2. That in my Ministry among you, I was not more frequent in visiting Families, and dealing with Persons in particular, to bring them to, and keep them in the ways of God. 3. That when the late grievous Defection began in the Year 1661, and 1662, (a) 'I did not stir up my self and others, whatsoever hazard might have ensued, to appear by Supplications and Publick Testimonies, in avowing the Covenant and Work of Reformation, which if it had been done by Church Judicatories, or but singly by Ministers and Professors, in the due Season, according to our Engagements might both have Glorified God, been a Door of Hope for the Posterity, procured more Peace to our own Consciences, yea possibly stopped much of the Defection and Suffering that hath since ensued. 4. When I appeared before the Council, I did not take occasion humbly, yet plainly to remonstrate the guilt of those things, which were publickly Enacted, and done against the Prerogative Royal of Jesus Christ, and against his Church and People, and to give warning of the Wrath to come on them and the Land, without Repentance; but did content my self with answering what was propounded to me. For these and such other Neglects and Miscarriages in my Life, I would desire to go mourning to the Grave, and would entreat for help from you

(a) *Here the LORD led His Servant to let us understand, what he meant by the Testimony he would have given, at the taking of the* Indulgence; *to the Indelible shame of the Impudent Remarker upon Mr.* B's. *Letter.*

you, and others of the Lord's People, to seek from himself Pardon, and purifying of both private and publick, both sins of Person and Calling.

II. (*b*) As for you, I may reckon you all in three Ranks: The first Rank, and I fear the greater number, is of those who, although, in general, professors of Christianity, yet, so far as could be observed, never laid Religion to heart; and some of these for gross Ignorance and loosness, were always Debarred from the Lords Supper; others although having some Knowledge and a civil walk, yet upon good grounds were always suspected to be void of the Love and Fear of GOD, continuing in their Natural unrenewed condition, neglecting the Worship of GOD in their Families and alone, and shewing by all their Carriage that their thoughts and desires never went beyond this World: These, no doubt, are glad of the change now com'd, that they may cast off Christs yoke, and be free of the Word and Discipline, which terrified and tormented them, and may now both swear terrible Oaths, and drink Drunk, which by some will be expounded as a clear evidence of their Loyaltie; they may now, after the Example of many Great ones, walk in the lust of uncleanness, mind nothing but how by any means, just or unjust, to get the World, and then how to spend it on their lusts; and to their power persecute all, who will not run with them to the same excess of Riot. Now as I have often in publick, with as great earnestness and tenderness as I could, warned these to flee from the wrath to come; so I would yet desire them, to stand still a little before they go to the pit, and hear from a truly loving Friend a few words, which I am confident, in the day of the great Reckoning shall be found a Message from the Living GOD. Do you believe there is a GOD, or Heaven or Hell? or can ye with all your strength scrape the thoughts of these out of your sleeping Consciences? Or do ye in such sort hate GOD, that because ye are his Creatures, ye will so far be avenged on your selves, as to sell your selves to his Enemie the Devil, for nought, to be tormented in all eternity? I am most sure, none of you all can be sure that ye are Reprobats; and I can give you assurance, greater than the stability of Heaven and Earth, even the sworn Word of him that liveth and reigneth for ever, that if ye will forsake your wicked way, and yet betake your selves to the only Saviour of lost Sinners, ye are no Reprobates. O! what advantage have ye, when ye have gained all the World and all the the Pleasures, all the Riches, and all the favour of it, and have lost your Immortal and precious Souls? It is utterly impossible, but that sometimes your own heart tells you, there will be bitterness in the end. Doth not Whoredom and Drunkenness waste the body, take away the Judgment, and leave a sting in the Conscience? Can any avoid the Curse, that goods gotten by falshood or oppression bring upon the man and all he hath, yea on his Posterity? Is it not sad that Satan can prompt men to Swear, Curse and Blaspheme, and utter that which he dare not utter himself? And although ye were free of all outward Outbreakings, doth not an unrenewed estate, the neglect of commanded Duties, Sabbath-breaking, and such evils, bind you over to the Wrath of Him, who is com-

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(b) *Let all Ministers hence learn, how to deal with unconverted Souls; for he taught this Bosom-Disciple, the Art of Fishing and Catching Men.*

there in flaming fire to take vengeance on them, who know not GOD, and obey not the Gospel? Ye may possibly think, you are so far gone on, that there is no Retreat, and the ways of the Lord are such as your Disposition can never agree with; but how can your Disposition agree to burn and consume and never consume in everlasting flames, where each of all your sins shall have their own particular Torment? How can ye agree to dwell with Infernal furies? Or will ye add to all your other wickedness, Dispaire; and despising of all the Lords loving loud and long continued Invitations? What shall you answer, if hereafter the Lord shall say to some of you. I would have given thee both Grace and Glory, if thou hadst but sought it; thou wouldest not give once two or three Knocks at my Door, you would not open when I knocked, oft and long at thy Door; by so doing you have subscribed thine own Reprobation and Condemnation.

Oh let me obtain this much of all and every one of you, for all the pains I have taken among you in preaching, for all my Nine years Banishment from you, for all the Prayers I have put up for you, for all the love which he who knoweth all things knoweth I bear to you, yea let your own Souls, and the love you have to your own welfare here, and hereafter obtain it; or rather let him, who for sinners shed all his most precious Blood at *Jerusalem*, obtain this of you, that you will take one day each of you alone, from morn to evening, forebearing both Meat and drink, and go apart rather into some quiet room in an House, or unto some part of the fields, where you may be most quiet, and having before-hand marked in the Bible such Places as are fit to be read at such a time, as also having somewhat searched your way toward God, and his ways toward you, there set your selves in his sight, spending the time in Confession of sins, and prayer for Pardon and Grace to serve him, and Save your own Souls: and if (which is not readily to be supposed) ye get no access on such a day, yet continue thereafter in such exercise and suits; for Deliverance from Hell, Enjoying of Heaven, and the Favour of God, are worth more pains then ye can take all our Life. Now if this so easie and necessary advice shall be rejected, without prescribing time and place, or measure and manner, but if the main intent of taking some time to humble your selves before God, and turning unto him be rejected, I take instruments, before Sun and Moon and all the Creatures, that I have left this warning, as an Indorsed Summonds fixed on the Door of your Consciences, to be called and judged before him, who is ready to judge the Quick and the Dead, at his appearing and in his Glory; when beside the witnessing of all your sins, of your own Consciences, and of all the Creatures, I also, as your lawful Minister, sent to procure your Reconciliation with God, shall appear to witness that ye got fair warning, but did reject the same, and would needs choose Death. Therefore while it is called to day, take a trial of Christs Yoke, do put him to it, and see whether or not he will open the windowes of Heaven, and Rain Blessings and Righteousness upon you; come and see, and taste the goodness of the Lord: Ye shall be made to say, He is a Rich and loving Master; once engage your hearts to him, and ye may defye Sathan, & all the allurments and Terrors of the World to draw you from him. Glad would my heart be to hear, before I go to the Grave, that some of you have begun a new Course, and if

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ye begin indeed, ye will not get it suppreſt, it will be heard: I ſhall as I can, pray for it, and deſire others here to pray for it. It is not needfull to multiply words, I leave it with you, as ye ſhall anſwer to Jeſus Chriſt, when he ſhall come in the Clouds.

The *Second* Rank is of thoſe, (c) who either had true Grace or ſeemed to have it, and who went a length beyond others in an orderly walk, and following the Ordinances at home and abroad, * but ſince the late change have hither turned looſe and profane, or ſo far ſided with the Corruptions of the time, that not one foot print of their former ſtedfaſtneſs and tenderneſs doth appear, but they are juſtly, reckoned among thoſe who will obey whatſoever is Commanded by man, although directly oppoſite to the will of God, revealed in his Word, and to their own lawfully Sworn Engagements, Theſe without Repentance and Amendment, are in a large worſe condition, than thoſe of the *firſt* Rank; for their Practice proclameth that once they betook themſelves to Jeſus Chriſt and his ways, and had ſome love and reſpect for him, but now they repent, that ever they did ſo; for they have ſeen ſomething in him, for which they judge, he is not worthy that they ſhould either do or ſuffer any thing for him. I am much aſſured, that Sathan hath got ſuch entrance in ſome of thoſe, who once had a Profeſſion and now are declined, that they ſhall not again be renewed unto Repentance, but ſhall wax worſe and worſe, having their Conſciences ſeared with an hot Iron. Oh that my fears may be prevented! But I have good confidence that ſome, who have gone a great length in this courſe of Apoſtacy, ſhall yet, before they go off the World, glorifie God, by a free and full Confeſſion of their foul fall. Yea, I truſt that ſundry of them want not a gnawing ſting even all along, but fear of ſhame before the World, and fear of wordly loſs (and Oh, how ſmall a thing of the World have any of theſe to have preferred to Bleſſed Jeſus Chriſt!) theſe hinder hitherto their coming off their dangerous way. Let all, who have declined, and who have not willingly and wilfully choſen to remain in oppoſition to God, and his righteous ways, and his Afflicted People, let them but compare their preſent ſtate with what it was before, and Anſwer within their own heart to God, which of the two they allow as beſt? Ye had encouragement beyond many others, in that the Lord enabled three or four of that Congregation, and theſe but boys, chearfully to endure Scourging and Baniſhment, rather than depart from their former Principles and Practice, and moſt of theſe are now in a better outward condition, than before, theſe ſhall be witneſſes againſt you, if ye do not in time betake your ſelves avowedly to your former Profeſſion. I have yet by me the Subſcriptions to the Covenant of all the Men, that were of the Congregation. * Not only that Paper, but the hands of all both Men and Women, which, in Swearing the Covenant, after Reading the Solemn Acknowledgement of Sins and Engagement to Duties, * were lifted up to God, theſe hands, becauſe they will endure for ever, ſhall be everlaſting Witneſſes

(c) *Secondly. How to deall with Backſliders.*

(*) *But who ſhall warn Backſliders now, when their Miniſters are Ringleaders in Backſliding, without ſo much as profeſſing Repentance!*

(*) *Obſerve how the Covenants are taken, and by whom.*

witneſſes either for you, or againſt you. Ye got warning that ſuch trials would come, as have ſince enſued, and ſeemed to be Fortified againſt them.

Remember the Speech I had to you, the Munday after the laſt Communion, wherein, Preſading what will ſhortly follow, I in a manner bid you farewell: ye ſeemed then to be ſome what Moved, and to Reſolve on all Hazard to abide by the Cauſe of God; ye ſeemed to run well, who or what hath hindered you that ye ſhould not obey the truth; it may be there are few or none in all the Land, who in all Points have keept their Covenant to God, but have Neglected ſome opportunities of their duty, and the good Lord will pardon ſuch as ſee the Plague of their own Heart, and turn to him: but to join in the courſe of Defection with thoſe, who have abjured that Covenant, to countenance an intruded Hireling, and join with him in that which they call Worſhip; yea, to ſit and drink with him, who was lawfully and deſervedly Excommunicated by the Church of *Scotland*, to keep Holy Days appointed by Men, to withdraw from the fellowſhip and meetings of thoſe, who in ſome degree continue in their Integrity; * Theſe are ſuch groſs and direct Violations of the Oath of God, as can proceed from nothing but a fearful deſerting from God; from a preferring the Will of Man, to the Will of the Living God, and preferring the Eaſe and Petty Pelf of the World, to the Salvation of your immortal Souls. I am fully ſure, ye dare not ſay before the Lord, that although all fear of inconvenience from Man were quite taken away, yet Conſcience of obeying the will of God would make you do, as now ye do. If ye were ſure within Ten days by death to turn your back on all, would you not think it fitting, that both God and the World ſaw a change on you, from your preſent way? And you have no aſſurance of one day. Think often on Chriſt's Word, *that who deny him before Men, He will deny them before his Father.* It is impoſſible, it is utterly impoſſible to be a Diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt, or an Heir of Glory, without a Reſolution to quite all, even Life it ſelf for his ſake, when called to it. 'I am much afraid, when the Conſcience of ſome of you ſhall waken, that 'ye ſhall hardly be keeped from ſome degrees of deſpair. Come off, come off 'in time, be not afraid or aſhamed to Witneſs againſt your ſelves, and the wicked 'courſe of the time; give Glory to God, get Peace to your own Conſcientes, 'ſtrengthen the hands, and make glad the Hearts of thoſe that are ſeeking God; 'ye know not, but if ye delay, your wakening may come after the Door is ſhut, 'and that then ſhall be no times of refreſhing from the preſence of the Lord! As for the Poor Wretch, that is thruſt in upon you, do not hate him, do not injure him, rather pray for him, and uſe means if it be poſſible, that he may recover, but do not countenance or join with him; ye may eaſily be ſenſible, he is not a Meſſenger from the Lord, for your Spiritual good, but a Snare and hardener of You in unwarranted ways. I may by good ground from the Word of GOD affirm, that unleſs a gracious change be wrought, both he and all that follow him ſhall periſh Eternally. Now the Lord himſelf, who only can do it, open your

* *Obſerve and compare with theſe whom the Church juſtly Depoſed, to wit, all who Declined the Reformation, and carried on contrary Courſes which all the Miniſters is doing this Day.*

your eyes to see the danger of your way, urge and enable you to take some time to Mourn before him in secret, and openly to testifie, as occasion offers, before good and evil, that ye are returned to your former Profession; then shall none of all your Transgressions be mentioned unto you.

The Third Rank (*d.*) is the little handful of those, who in such an evil time have laboured to keep their Garments clean, to whom it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer, or at least expose themselves to suffering for his sake: Ye have great cause to bless the Lord, and I and many others will join with you, to bless his holy Name, that howbit ye have but a little strength, ye desire to keep his Word, and not deny his Name; Ye have found and will find yet more, that Christ will not be behind with you, nor sleep in your Debt. I trust your consolations abound, far beyond your fears or dangers of sufferings, Your hundred fold is going to the score for you and yours, in the Bank of Heaven, when more than an hundred is the interest for one. Christ was once owned as King of his Church, in that Land, that in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government, his Laws in his Word should be the only Rule; and hereunto all from the highest to the lowest had by Oath engaged themselves; now abjured Prelacy is brought in, Christs faithful Servants cast out, Hirelings thrust in his House, the whole disposing of Church Matters, (*e.*) Persons and Meetings by the Act of *Supremacy*, referred to the sole Arbitriment of a Mortal Creature, and Persecution bended against all, who go not alongs in that Apostacie and Perjury: and is not then suffering stated on as important a quarrel, as ever was since the foundation of the World? the smallest point of Christ's Prerogative royal, is not only worth the sufferings but worth more than the Eternal Salvation of all the Elect. (*f.*) Be not affraid but he, who sits crowned King on Mount Zion, knows well how to right himself; Not only a touch of the Iron rod in his Hand, or the Sword that cometh out of his Mouth, but a frown or wink of his Eye, can dash in pieces all the Potsheards of the Earth: He shall appear to your Joy, and they shall be ashamed; this cloud of Opposition to his work will be scattered, as many others have been before. He is only taking a Tryal, what will be every Mans part; and not only the Malice of Enemies, but the weakness of some of his own will be discovered. (*g.*) He will suffer the Opposers of his work to sport themselves a little, as if they had done their Work, and rooted out both Truth and Godliness: And he will have his own brought to a Necessity both of more Vigorous Faith depending cleanly and close on himself and his Word, and more deep Humiliation, serious Repentance and Amendment: (*h*) But he hath his set time, when he will awak as a mighty Man; And I hope, build his Palace in that Land, with the addition of more Glory, than ever was before. As

(d) *Thirdly How to strengthen Wrestlers and the Weak.*

(e) *Let Ministers take head to this.*

(f) *Let such as talk as if Arguments taken from Homologation, were dubious listen to this Golden Sentence.*

(g) *His hope of a Recovery, and when, and how,*

(h) *Its sweet and seasonable advice to Wrestlers.*

As for you, I would Advertise you of two or three things. 1. It is not enough to be stedfast in the present controversie, ye must study to be Holy in all manner of Conversation, and shine as lights, blameless and harmless, the Sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation: an Idol entertained in the Heart, or a blemish in the Life, will make a fearful discovery of unsoundness in the end: Let the Love and fear of God be made evident to all onlookers, in all your carriage, so shall ye go near to convince even Adversaries of the Reality of your Religion. 2. Consider this Battle is not at an end, ye have not resisted unto Blood, ye know not what Trials may abide you, keep on your Armour, strengthen your Resolution to deny your selves and all ye have, for his sake; dwell near to and be always in good terms with the Captain of Salvation; and be not afraied but ye shall be furnished abundantly what to say, what to do, and how to endure. 3. (i) 'If the Lord, for such fearful Apostacy, and Breach of 'Covenant, shall besides the dreadful Spiritual Judgments already poured out, 'send any common Calamity in that Land, as Sword, Pest or Famine, I would 'Pray and hope, that ye may be hid: But if any of these stroaks shall reach any of you, do not grudge, your sins might procure more; it is much if ye get your Souls for a prey. 4. (k) Keep up your Meetings for Prayer and mutual upstirring, cry mightily to God, each of you apart, so shall not your Meetings be flat or formal, a few wrestlers may help to keep God in the Land, he is not willing to depart, if any will but hold him. Seek Repentance to the Land and your selves, stability to those that stand, recovery to such as have slidden or fallen: Let me have some little share in your Prayers, that I may finish my course with Joy, and still bring forth fruit in Old Age. Seek from the Lord right Zeal, Wisdom and Tenderness, to deal with any of your Neighbours, that ever appeared for him, and now have declined: If ye prevail with any of them, admit them to your Meetings. Even the Lord give you understanding in all things.

III. Now as concerning the Condition of the Church, and Work of GOD in that Land, ye remember, that although I shuned not, according to my poor measure, and as occasion offered, and necessity required, to shew my mind of publick Matters, Dangers and Duties of the time; * yet I used not to insist very much in such things, as not being much inclined or able for Disputing; 'and having found by frequent Experience: That so soon as any were gained 'to close indeed with Christ, (l) and lay Religion to heart in earnest these gene-

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(i) *His fore apprehensions of future and sad Judgements.*

(k) *Here let such Ministers as are against, or cold Friends to this Exercise, know, that they are Men of a different Soil from this great Soul-catcher, and alas! I fear so shall be seen on it; for it was also the Observation of great and gracious Mr.* Rutherfoord, *that he never knew a Man against these Edifying Exercises that did good in the Ministry.*

(*) *Surely this is not to contradict* Isa. 58. 1. *Shew my People their Transgression and the House of* Jacob *their Sin.*

(l) *This is a Noble Direction for Ministers.*

rally out of a Native principle became presently found in the controversies of th time. And in the present case, several things would seem rather to perswad silence, because indeed our present Condition ought rather to be matter of La mentation and mourning before the Lord, day and Night, alone, and in Com pany, than matter of Discourse amongst our selves; and because its very hard to use freedom, and not displease some, whom a Man would be very unwilling to offend; and because of all Men living, I have least reason to think, that I would offer my light as a rule of any other Mans light. But when I consider that as one (although most unworthy, yet) intrusted by Jesus Christ, as an Ambassador from him to his people, I am shortly to give account before him of my Negotiation, (m) I cannot decline what light, I judge, I have from him out of his Word, anent pre sent affairs, to open the same to you, as in his sight, in as great simplicity and in genuity, as I can.

And First, I need not insist to declare, that notwithstanding of all that hath fall en out of late, and all the Objections against the Work of Reformation, all which were both propounded and answered above 30 years ago, that yet both I and all that Land, and the Posterity after us stand bound before the Lord, to adhere to the National Covenant, the Solemn League and Covenant, and all the parts and de grees of Reformation and Uniformity, which we had attained: Neither will I con ceal, that howbeit thereafter, I withdrew from the meetings of the Protest ers, when I perceived the matter like to tend to a stated Schisme; that yet after as narrow search, as I could make, I have no Challenges, but rather Approbation, that in the beginning I joined in the Protestation, against the Courses taken in the year 1651 and thereafter, for bringing in the Malignant Enemies of the Work of God, to Counsels and Command. I am not willing to rake in such ashes (Oh if the fire were extinguished and forgotten!) and I know that some good Men, in a day of geart Darkness and distress, did what they conceived for the time duty; (n) yet when I consider our former Engagements to the contrar, and that the Princi ples & Motives of these courses would necessarly recoil against former endeavours of purging the Army; and against the Opposition made to the unlawful Engage ment in the year 1648, Yea against the Solemn League and Covenant; and by consequence against the late work of Reformation, yea against the first Reformati on from Popery; and that the bulk of the disaffected Ministers of the Land, some whereof, although born down, might have been observed in every General As sembly, even from the year 1638, that these did natively joyn to make up the party, I judge these courses to have been no small step of the defection of the Church. I could have wished indeed, that more Moderation, and more real endeavours for

Uni-

(m) *Least any should abuse the Gracious Author his Sobriety how he is led of the Lord, to Limite and Explain in things relating to the present Controversies.*

(n) *Hence First, The Obligation of these is to be inculcat, else a Ministry is not faithfull to Christ.*

2dly. Consider his owning of the Protestation, and the Solidity of the ground of his Adhesion.

nion in the Lord, had been used on both sides; but I was also convinced, that the late sad change was in some respect seasonably sent from the Lord (o) that faithful Ministers and Professors should rather suffer by the Prelats, and such as by overturning the Work of God, brought them in, than by Judicatures of the Church, which in all appearance would shortly have followed; yea in some places was already begun: (a) And it is most sad, that when time hath brought to light the necessary consequence of these courses, yet few or none of these have Testified any Resentment thereof. Beside clear Demonstrations of the Efficacy of the Gospel, in converting and confirming sinners, which hath been as conspicuous in the Church of *Scotland*, as in any of the Reformed Churches, the Lord was pleased from the beginning to put in the hand of his Servants, in that Land, a piece of Service, not so directly called for at the hands of some others of the Churches (b) to wit, as Christ's Prophetical and Priestly Office had been debated, suffered for and cleared; so they should stand and contend for his Kingly Office; that he is not only inwardly a Spiritual Head to his Mystical Church; but externally a Spiritual Politick Head to the Politick Body of the Visible Church of Professors, and their only Law-giver; to invest them with intrinsick power to meet for his Worship; and their Officers appointed by him, to meet for Discipline, and ordering the Affairs of his House; that no Ceremonie or Invention of Man, that want his stamp, is to be brought into his Worship; no Officer to be brought into his House, but such as he hath appointed in his Word; and although his Servants, and people are to carry towards Gods Ordinance of Magistracy, where they Live, as any other Subjects, and to deny them no respect or Obedience, due to them; yet in their Meetings and Administrations they are not Subordinat unto, or Dependant on any Civil power.

These and such others were the points asserted, and suffered for by the renowned worthies of this Church, by Mr. *Knox*, Mr. *Welsh*, Mr. *Bruce* and many others, who now shine in glory. And although there have been in former time several sad days of the defection of Ministers, as in the year 1584. and at other

 times

(o) *See how above he explains himself, and on whom the blame is laid, and at whose Door by the following words it is lodged.*

(a) *Let this be taken special Notice of as to the Causes of Wrath, and the acter of this gracious Author of his Brethrens carriage, while the other carried it so high as it was like to make a Schism.*

(b) *And here I cannot forbear to tell one Story of this gracious Author, who upon the Clamour that Resolutioners made about Schism against the Protesters; If, said he the old Castle should fall all along to a corner, and the fallen Rubbish should raill against a Corner that stood, and cry come, come, why standest thou? Yea, and if not, we shall Protest ye have made a Schism against us.*

2dly. *See how this gracious Man states for having the better access to charge home the Defection.*

3dly. *Let this Golden Sentence put the Indulged to read, that they may be put to shame and silence.*

tinies, (d) yet becauſe there never was ſuch a black hour and power of darkneſs, as is now fallen upon us. I ſhall in the ſecond place touch ſome particulars, for which I judge ye, and I, and many others have reaſon moſt bitterly to mourn before the Lord. 1. That in the begining of this grievous defection. Such a baſe cowardiſe fell generally on all, that not one Teſtimony from any Church Judicatory in *Scotland*, was given to the cauſe of God, and againſt the horrid violation of a ſworn Covenant; yea ſome as induſtriouſly ſtopped Teſtimonies, as if they had beed hired ſo to do; ſome whereof pretending, it was not a fit time, when a moſt fit time came, and being urged thereto by Authority, yet declined it.

* It was firſt and laſt the guilt of thoſe, who had the conviction on them, to neglect the duty for want of the concurrence of others. True Zeal for the honour of our Maſter, or remembrance of our reckoning before him, would have ſtirred us up to another ſort of Boldneſs: We would not have been ſo blunt in our own concernment; the Sight of the Father's Danger brake the Tack of a Son's Tongue, who was Tongue-tack'd from the Birth. (e) The LORD indeed provided a Real Teſtimony from ſome, who had and have yet of their Bones witneſſing before the Sun. But oh! that we did not Adventure ſome what for His Glory, for our own Peace, for the Good of Poſterity; yea for the true Good and Edifying even of our Oppoſites: We ought not only to be deeply humbled, and deal much and long for Pardon for ſuch an Omiſſion; but earneſtly ſeek Grace and Strength to take hold of any Opportunity for Repairing ſuch a Loſs. 2. That ſome of thoſe Miniſters, who were laid aſide by Authority, did in a manner lay themſelves aſide, as if they had been Exonered of all Charge: whereas ſuch as have any Liberty of a Subject, and Feet and Tongue looſe, ought rather to be inſtant in Seaſon and out of Seaſon, and from Houſe to Houſe inſtruct and warn Young and Old, both of Former Charge, and every where, as Occaſion offers.

It

(d) 4thly. *See how he puts this Defection for kind and quality beyond all that have been in the Church; and hence ſtrongly infers what follows, Firſt, the grievous guilt and groſs Defection, of not teſtifying againſt the Defections.* 2dly. *See how plainly he chargeth the ſtoppers of Teſtimonies againſt that Wickedneſs, this will make their ſtink and their ill ſavour come up to all Generations.* 3dly. *Here is the guilt of ſuch who were foulled in that unfaithfulneſs, becauſe of the want of their Company (who were never ſeen afterwards in Chriſt's Company by way of a Teſtimony) laid to their Door and Lamented, and with what unanſwerable Arguments he lays it upon, and leaves it at the Door of every Man's Conſcience.*

* *What may be ſaid of theſe who have complyed with that and all theſe courſes ſome ſince.*

(e) *But eſpecially let the Remarker on Mr.* Burnet's *Letter Read and bluſh, at his Babling on the head of Teſtimonies, but I ſuppoſe he will read and rage, and will have thoſe whom he Patronizeth to keep him Company always, let him and them remember, they are gone out from one who walked with GOD (Mr.* Livingſton.) 3dly *See what he calls to,* 1ſt. *Humiliation.* 2dly. *A ſtrenuous endeavour to recover the ground we have loſt, But alas! We neither mind to fall on our Knees before GOD, nor yet to ſtand on our feet before the Enemy) by Duty in Preaching,*

is true, none are now Apostles, but Ministers have the same Charge, that Apostles had, to feed the Flock of Christ *; and are given primarily not to any particular Charge, but to the Universal Visible Church. Few of the Apostles, or Apostolick Men, had either such Churches and Pulpits to preach in, or a Settled maintenance. Love to Christ and Love to the Souls of the People, that are perishing in Ignorance and Disobedience, would banish the Love of ease, and the fear of danger, and the Idol of Carnal prudence. That however a man for maintenance of himself, and his family, might practise Medicine, or labour Land, or betake himself to any other employment; yet he is to remember the Ministrie is his main imployment, and that at his admission he engaged before God to be diligent and faithful therein. Some have preached out of prison windows; some have converted their keepers: It were to be wished, that a Minister in all places, in all company, at all times were about some what of his Masters work; so shall he hear at last, well done good and faithful Servant. * Let us deal with the Lord, that he will deal with the hearts of all his Servants, and thrust them out into his harvest; as I hope some who seemed to be some what deficient in that duty, are already begun to bestir themselves; and others, upon sight of the courses of the time, and the peoples necessity and willingness to hear, well do yet more abundantly.

(f) 3. That after the Destroyers of the Lords Heritage, had Razed the work of Reformation to the Foundation, and had not only invaded the Rights that he hath allowed his Servants, in the Government of his House, but as far as Creatures can do, Usurped his own Prerogative Royal; and not at all hiding the snare, but by the Letter to the Council, and the Councils Act opening the design, to have the Ministry of the word wholly dependant on the Civil Power and Supremacy; that yet some Ministers accepted that, which they called an Indulgence of their Ministrie, without any publick testimony, either of their adherence to the Oath of God and work of Reformation, or against these Usurpations. Oh! for a head turned into waters, and eyes a fountain of tears, to deplore day and night such an

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* *This Answers the Objections against Field Preaching and Ministers Preaching through the Country, or where the Interest of Christ, and necessity of his People requires.*

* *But what's to be said to such as opposed them and yet doth, who went out to work in the* LORD'S *Vineyeard.*

(f) *Here is that faithful Mans testimony against the indulgence, before that its brightness, Beauty and Burning Zeal may not be seen, the Remarker on Mr.* Burnets *Letter draws a Curtain, which will be a sad mark on him to Posterity: Its his Desertion under his own hand. Now let what he means by a Testimony here, be compared with what is noted Page 3d. and the folly, Falsehood, and Impudence of the Remarker, will be remarkable. What did not Mr.* Livingston *see, that wretched* Whum-wham, *substitute in place of a Testimony. His teazing it up to the consistency of a testimony, discovers this only, that the Plaguy sore is got into his own eye, and that it will be a Plague to all that follow the light of his* ignis fatuus.

an indignity, done to the Son of God, without a Witness; and such shame cast upon the Church of *Scotland*. Our Fathers for far less matters contested with the Powers of the Earth, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with us; and do we think that our Lord and Master is not able to maintain his own cause? I have great charity for most of the men, who I suppose may have a sting in the bosome, for neglect of the opportunity. A *Peter* and a *Barnabas* may be carried away at a time to and by a dissimulation; (*f*) the credit of the Ministrie ought to be dear to us, but the credite of our Master and His interests ought to be dearer than all things else. The Ministrie of the Gospel is indeed a great benefite, but nothing hinders why the Ministrie of the Gospel might (*g*) not have been had, and not yet be had without a Pulpit and a Stipend; It is an ill made bargian, where the one party gets clear gain, the Keyes of Christs house in a manner delivered up to them; and the other is uncertain if God will bless a Ministrie purched at such a rate. (*h*) If any Ministers have had a hand in contriving or procuring that Indulgence, I suppose, they have done more mischief to the poor Church of Christ in that Land, then all the Prelats, and all their Hirelings; and if such an Indulgence should be offered to, * and accepted by all the outed Ministers of the Land, without a publick Testimony, I would look upon it as the most Dreadful presage, that yet hath appeared, of the Lords totally forsaking of the Land. It is not now Episcopacy and Ceremonies, that is the Controversie; but whether Jesus Christ be King of his own Church, which he hath bought with his Blood, or if the *Leviathan* of the Supremacy shall swallow up all, to * which it is all alike, whether it have Prelats or Presbyters subservient unto it, only it must rule according to its own Arbitriment without control, and bring forth yet more and more Fruits of all impiety and prefanity. (*i*) A Minister, that can preach Truths, which no Man question, and miskens this grand Controversie, or

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(f) *And here is a* Paul *withstanding them, but the Remarker to the Dissocation of Conscience, Reason and Respect to the Memory of that great Witness, stretcheth himself to all hight to hide this testimony, but it will be a Testimony when he hath done all he can to Patronize the wickedness testified against, and a testimony against his way.*

(g) *Observe here, how he speaks of the Credit of the Ministry.*

(h) *I earnestly entreat all the indulged Ministers in* Scotland, *to read these weighty Words, and let them not be blindfolded by their blindfolded and blindfolding Patron the Remarker, who durst not if great* Livingston *had been alive, have dared so to have darkened so full and faithful a Testimony. Here the Remarker will be found grosly either ignorant or worse, in Dissembling or denying these threatnings and tamperings, for it can be made out.*

* *Tho' it was not accepted by all then, yet since all hath recognized it by taking the Toleration and what hath since followed, even may not the same consequence be feared.*

* *How like is this to our Time.*

(i) *Here, this Prudent, this Gracious, this eminently Sober Minister, after many Years Experience, gives his Judgement of what we now call prudent Preaching, and explains what he meant.*

or ſpeaks of it ſo darkly, as that he diſcovers he deſires not to be underſtood, I durſt not ſay, that in that he is a Faithful Ambaſſador of Jeſus Chriſt. Sure if his own Reputation were touched, he would ſpeak in a more picquant manner; and his Maſters Honour ſhould be above his own repute. (k) A bare not-agreeing to the Accommodation propounded, is not a ſufficient evidence of faithfulneſs, at ſuch a time. Sathan counts no great gain of the Prelats, nor them that ſet them up, nor them that follow them; but outed Miniſters, and noted Profeſſors, would be a great prize to him: And I am ſure, winnow as hard as he can, he ſhall get none that belong unto Chriſt. (l) O! how ſad is it, that ſome to pleaſe Men, and thoſe the overturners of all the work of God, have laid aſide that uſeful part of Reformation and Uniformity, the expounding of the Scripture, formerly practiſed to ſo much Edification, and others mangle it ſo, as it were as good to forbear it. The excuſe of the ſhort days of Winter, or the weakneſs of ones Body, may well allow a Man to make both the Lecture and the Preaching ſhorter, but on ſuch a pretext to lay it aſide; Eſpecially, being in ſome ſome ſort a caſe of Confeſſion, I fear ſhall not be allowed before the Righteous Judge. If it be ſaid, better have Preaching without Lecturing, nor no Preaching at all.

True, if there be a Phyſical impediment in the way of lecturing, or if all preaching had been by the Lord aſtricted to ſuch a Pulpit by the Indulgence of ſuch a Creature: But when Men come to ſpy out our Liberty, which we have in Chriſt Jeſus, that they may bring us into bondage, and would inure us to take one of their burdens after another, we ought not to give place by ſubjection, no not for an Hour; for by ſuch arguing, better have preaching without ever citing *Iſaiah*, nor none; Better without mentioning the Decree of Election, or imputed righteouſneſs, nor none at all. Alas! the Lord hath poured on us the Spirit of deep ſleep, and hath cloſed our eyes, our Prophets and our Rulers, the Seers hath covered, O what a deep wound was it to my heart, to hear of a Miniſter, who I think certainly hath both true grace and rare gifts, that he ſo far complied with the courſe of the time, as to keep a holy Day, appointed by Men, and drink about the Bon-fires! what will be the end of thoſe things? What, when GOD ſhall waken the Conſcience? Our Miniſters were our Glory, and I fear our Idol, and the Lord hath ſtained the pride of our Glory. (m) None of us who are here, and ſeem to be diſſatisfied with ſome things at Home, want conviction of our

(k) *Here is a hint that may fill the Souls of theſe Incommodators with Terror, I deſire all may Read it and advert.*

(l) *Whereas the unhappy Remarker deſines the acceptance as Duty, this happy Seer foreſaw, what would follow and hath come to paſs, and amongſt other things he foreſaw, that as our Miſery there would be ſuch Remarkers, whoſe Remark would be Declarative of their and our Defection by the Indulgence. O happy Seer, but unhappy Remarker!*

(m) *Here great Mr.* Livingſton *will run the riſque with Mr.* Bruce, *Mr.* Rutherfoord, *Mr.* Guthry, *and all that upon the ſame account, will be followers of the Lord and of him, as they who on deſign diſgrace the Miniſters.*

our own grievous miscarriages; and it is probable that if we had been at Home we might have done worse than others. If it were possible, I would desire so to speak for Christ and his interest, as not to reflect on any person, but *Levi's* duty and blessing lyes otherways. (*n*) I profess to you, although I have a real excuse of my inability to debate and argue, without which the propounding of ones mind seems too Dictator like, that yet I have apprehension, that my not writing to some Friends, makes the guilt of some things done or omitted more mine, than theirs. Oh for the day, when all of us, whether together or apart, without reflecting on any but our selves, might mourn the mourning of *Hadadrimmon* in the Valley of *Megiddon*, I should look on that, as *Scotlands* great delivery: Yea it is to be most earnestly sought from the Lord, and endeavoured, that the whole bulk of the people, and even those who have carried on the Defection, might get Repentance; so should we be a greater wonder to the world of his matchless Mercy, nor now we are of sudden and shameful Apostacy: And many such wonders he can work; if he please, and we may suppose will work, if there were wrestlers for such a blessing, but that also is his own gift: To him be all Glory for ever.

In the close, it will be expected that I give you all some Directions, how to walk in such a time; And as they come in my mind, I shall set them down. 1st, In all things, and above all things, let the Word of GOD be your only Rule, Christ Jesus your only hope, his Spirit your only Guide, and His Glory your only End. 2dly, See that each of you apart Worship GOD every day, morning and Evening, at least; Read some of His Word, and call on Him by prayer, and give Him thanks. If ye be straitned with business, it is not so much the length of your Prayer that he regards, as the Uprightness and the Earnestness of the heart; but neglect not the duty; and if ye by without the hearing of others, utter your voice, it is sometime a great help, but do it not to be heard of others; sing all a Psalm, or some part of a Psalm; ye may learn some by heart for that purpose. 3dly. Through the whole day labour to set the Lord always before you, as present to observe you, and strengthen you for every duty, and then look over how the day hath been spent, before you sleep. 4thly, Such as have Families, set up the Worship of GOD in your Families, as ye would avoid the wrath, that shall be poured on the Families that call not on his Name. 5thly, As occasion offers of any honest Minister coming alongst, neglect not the same; and on the Lords Day

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(n) *An Apologie like a true* Levite *and Son of* Zadock. *Hereby Mr.* Livingston's *Antedated Defence for his Poor Brethrens Practice driven to speak as they can for the same cause he owns (though they be reproached as Dictators) and recommend Mr.* Livingstons's *Directions. He means Page* 9. *Mark R. That such Byassed Remarkers should have access to abuse any Passage in this Golden Epistle, to Patronize that Backsliding, for which he Pleads.*

Here we have his thought of Indulged Mens carriage, about the Lectures which is in his account, Desertion punished with Desertion, and Defection with Defection. And let his Ponderous reasons sink in their Souls, till the weight thereof squeeze their Heart out at their Eye. This will be their best Apologie.

go where ye can hear the Word ſincerely preached by a Sent Miniſter, who will Witneſs againſt the evils of the time, (*) without which, I apprehend, whatever a Mans gifts be, the Lord will not ſend the Bleſſing. (o) *Oxnam* is not far off, and I hope Mr. *Scot* doth, and will declare for the ſworn Reformation, and teſtify againſt the preſent Defection; But I dare not bid your hear any of the intruded Hirelings, whom they call Curats. I know ſome good Men have heard, or do hear ſome of them, but I believe, if all fear of inconvenience were removed, they would do otherways. If no occaſion of a publick Meeting be, or if ye cannot go to it, ſanctifie the Lords Day in your Families, or at leaſt each of you in your own heart. 6. Give no occaſion to the World to ſay, that ye neglect your Calling, or are buſie bodies in other Mens Matters, or have any doubleneſs in your Worldl dealing, a faithful carriage free of Covetouſneſs is a great Ornament to the profeſſion. 7. Have a care of your Children that they be taught to read, and have Bibles ſo ſoon as they can uſe them, and take them with you to hear the Word preached, and inſtruct them your ſelves the more diligently, that publick Means are ſcarce. (p) 8. Such as have any leaſure, Read ſome good Books, whereby ye may profit in Knowledge and affection: Read now and then the Covenants, the Confeſſion of Faith, and the longer Catechiſm, and the little Treatiſe Printed with them. I would recommend to you the writings of Mr. *Durham*, and Mr. *Binning*, and Mr. *William Guthrie*, and Mr. *Andrew Gray*, eſpecially Mr. *Rutherford's* Letters, (I hope ſhortly ye ſhall be ſupplied with ſome more Copies of them) as alſo any good pieces from *England*, as Mr. *Allan*, or the like: I dare not recommend *Baxter* to you, he is a dangerous Man: Let *Chaſters* and *Standhil* buy ſome ſuch as they can, and lend them to others to be read. (q) 9. Any thoughts ye have of the buſineſs of the time, examine them well by the Word, and preſent them oft to God by prayer; (*) And what ye get ſo confirmed, be not eaſily moved therefrom, although ſome Miniſters ſhould be of a contrar Opinion; For in thoſe days ſundrie of the common People have clearer light and ſteadier practice, than ſome Miniſters;

* *Obſerve what can be now expected, ſurely he would have ſpared to ſpeak, ſo of Mr.* Scot, *had he known he had taken the Indulgence.*

(o) *See how this is qualified and cuts off all manner of boaſt from the Remarker, for their tongues was tacked from that day, and never did they give that Teſtimony he calls, and accounts ſuch as here before Noted. Nor were they in caſe to do it, neither ſhall they ever be till in the firſt place this Teſtimony be given for Renuncing of the Indulgence.*

(p) *Mr.* Livingſton *was no leſs pleaſed to hear the indulged Men railed by the Name of the Councils Curats, than the other Hirelings by the Name of the Biſhops Curats, as can be Witneſſed.*

(q) *Let all of us and the Remarker remember this Note of a Miniſter, as of more Grace, Gravity, Experience and Tenderneſs than himſelf, ſo of much ſolid Learning.*

(*) *This would be called Enthuſiaſm.*

but be not proud, or ſelf willed in your own Opinion. (r) 10. By any means ſee that ye be not drawn to a Contempt of the Miniſtry, or Miniſters in whom any thing of God really appeareth, although ſome might have ſliden in an Hour of Temptation; but ſtudy all lawful ways of union and healing; yet ſo as ye approve nothing which the Word and your Conſcience condemn. 11. Strengthen your ſelves in the main Grounds of Religion againſt Popery, and Read ſome ſhort Treatiſes for that purpoſe; Ye know not but it may be a great part of the Tryal of the time. 12. Some Miniſters have begun of late to queſtion Chriſts imputed Righteouſneſs, look upon theſe, whatever ſhew they make of Moderation and accurat walking, as Enemies to Jeſus Chriſt, and the Salvation of Souls. 13. Keep you far, very far, from this laſt device of Satans Quakeriſm, which, under colour of Sobriety and Patience, overthrows all the grounds of Chriſtian Religion; and indeed they ſhould not be looked on as Chriſtians; themſelves and the light within them, which is alſo in all Pagans, is all their Saviour: Converſe not with them; As much as ye can, avoid conference with them; The evil Spirit that is in them deſires no better, nor continual wrangling: many are much miſtaken if there be not much Devilry among them, as ſome com'd off from them have teſtified. 14. I know the courſe ceaſeth now that was taken, for providing the poor with Meat, but after your ability ſet apart ſome of your Means for the poor, I mean not the ſturdy Vagabounds, but poor Houſholders, eſpecially thoſe that have any good in them. 15. Deal in all earneſtneſs and love with any of your Neighbours, whom ye perceive in a way that will deſtroy their Souls: Viſite your Neighbours in their ſickneſs, and drop ſomthing for their Souls good. 16. Let ſuch as have been Elders, and have not run the wicked courſe of the time, know that their obligation ceaſeth not, but rather is increaſed to Viſite and overſee the Flock, and warn and comfort, as occaſion requires. 17. Forget not Chriſts Command to love your Enemies, and pray for them that perſecute you: Many a time our carnal anger and bitterneſs puts on a diſguiſe, as if it were *Zeal*; true love to GOD and our Neighbour would prompt us to many duties, that now are forgot, and to a better way of doing duties, and yet keep us from being partakers of other Mens ſins. 18. Guard your hearts from a carnal diſpoſition, in ſpeaking or hearing of the miſcarriages of others, and let not that be all the matter of your Diſcourſe, howbeit it may be part; But there is more edifying to be ſpeaking of what is good. 19. I hear there is a rare work of Grace begun of late in ſome, not far from you, in the borders of *Northumberland*, I judge it were for your advantage if ſome of you, ſuch as are able, went thither to be acquainted with them: Your Friend *Henry Hall* would eaſily make your acquaintance, their fire-edge might help to kindle up Old ſitten-up Profeſſors; yea if ſome of you who are yet graceleſs would go and ſee their way, they might be ſmitten with that bleſſed Diſeaſe.

I fear ye ſhall hardly Read my Hand, and yet it hath taken near by as many days

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[r] *See how prudently the 10 is alſo Cautioned, but through the whole he may be ſeen to be ſingularly directed of GOD.*

days to write, as there are Pages; But it was not fitting to make ule of any others Hand.

Let this Letter be Read to all of the Pariſh, who will be willing to hear it, and to any that are gone out of it, as *Andrew Burkholme* and *Margaret Walker*, or any that uſed ordinarly to meet with us, as Mrs. *Eliot*, *Iſabel Simpſon*, and ſuch others. I know there is a great change, ſince I left you, by the death of ſome, and coming in of others, but I am ſometimes refreſhed to look over the Roll of the Pariſh, as it was when I left you. Deſire from me Mr. *Henry* and Mr *William Erskin*, or any other of that ſort, to come now and then to Viſite and water you. I could wiſh that when ye hear of any honeſt Merchant in *Edinburgh*, or any other coming hither, ſome of you would give them a particular account of both good and evil, to bring to me; I had a little account lately from *John Totcha*, that made me both joyful and ſad; I ſhall write when any of my Sons are to come over, that if they can, they will come to you; a day or two, and bring me information how it is with you. Now as I can at this diſtance, I embrace you all, and all that uſed to Join with us at our Communions: I ſalute you all, I bleſs you all, I commend you all to GOD and the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an Inheritance among all them which are ſanctified. The rich and powerful Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all. Thus wiſheth

Your loving and lawful Paſtor

Rotterdam 7. October 1671. JOHN LIVINGSTOUN.

BRITISH 17NO85 MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT to the READER,

HERE the Reader is desired to advert to a few things. First, That all the Margine marked with the Alphabet, is Mr. *Mackward's*; that marked with the Star, being of another hand. And tho' the Margine be not so near the matter as could have been wished, nor that marked with the Alphabet, and that marked with the Star so distinct, yet it succeeds in order tho Transposed to another Page. And if any thing Impertinent be in the Margine, that marrs Sense, impute it not to the Author but the Corrector, who could not well Read it, it was so broken and soiled; It's not doubted, but there will be some to Cavil at some things contained therein, or draw wrong Conclusions, contrary the design of both Author and Matter, for neither the Credit of the one, nor Soundness and Plainness of the other, will make it proof against such who love not the Truth, at least loves not to have it made so clear and plain, as to discover their Spots and Disconformity to it: For tho' the Author be of such Credit that they dare not Censure him, least they fall under the hazard of Censure thereby themselves, yet they will wiredraw or wrest the matter; and if they find it so sound and plain, that they dare not say any thing to its discredit, least thereby they stain their own, then they'll endeavour to make it an Imposture by alledging it the Birth of another mind, as they did with the Modest Reply, which when they could find no fault with either matter Order or Season, save what is incident to all Humane Writing.

Then they gave it out, that it was the performances of a Athestical Club, and that with such Dexterity, Dispatch, and Success, that within ten Days after the first Publishing the Modest Reply, the Ministers in all Quarters of the Kingdom made the People believe, that it was the effect of such and such Pens, after they had first given it out at *Edinburgh*; But as they were Lieing, so they knew that they were Lieing: For notwithstanding of their too great Success in turning things upside down. Yet I am confident, that they do not expect such a Change, that the profest Followers of Satan would take up CHRIST's Standart and Display His Banner, now when they the profest Followers of Christ have laid it down: It's true, the Devils confest him, when the Priests, Scribes and Pharisees denyed him; But they were forc'd to it. But to pass all this, the Author of the Modest Reply is neither an Athiest nor profane, so far as Humane Capacity is able to Judge, but a Christian, a Presbyterian of the Strictest Sect. *viz.* of those Nick-Named & called *M'Millanean's* Principles, I shall give you them in their own Terms. But this is no new thing; for as Mr. *M'millan* and them that adhere to him, hold for Principle nothing but what was holden by the Cloud of Witnesses; So their Treatment is nothing but what the Faithful Contenders for Truth have met with from their Mothers Children, who detained the Truth in unrighteousness, & was angry with them that would not do the same. But to Conclude, the sad History of the time do so Confirm what this Gracious Author foresaw in the beginning, that they will be bold to excess who will Cavil it; So hoping and desiring that hereby GOD may be Glorified, and the Reader edified, I rest Zions and thy Souls well Wisher.